

## Appearing in Court

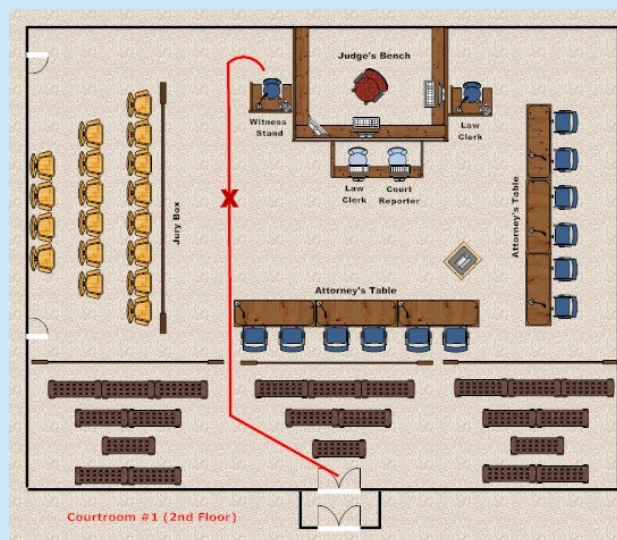
- Whenever you are being asked a question, listen to the full question before answering. If you need the question repeated you are free to ask to have that done.
- You are sworn to tell the truth, so tell it. Do not worry about whether what you say will hurt either party. You are not an advocate. You are there to tell what you know.
- The court reporter must hear all your answers so please speak clearly and do not nod your answers for "yes" or "no," or say "uh-huh" or "uh-uh."
- Do not discuss the case with jurors or even talk to them to simply say hello if you are in the same public area.
- Once you have been excused as a witness and have all your witness paper forms filled out, you are free to go.
- After testifying, you should not tell other witnesses what was said during your testimony until the case is completed.

## Walking Into the Courtroom

There are courtrooms in the Cedar Rapids Federal Courthouse that have different layouts. Layouts of each courtroom are provided on the back of this pamphlet with instructions on how to approach the judge to be sworn under oath and where the witness stand is in each courtroom. Be sure to stay in the witness stand until the judge dismisses you after all questions have been asked.

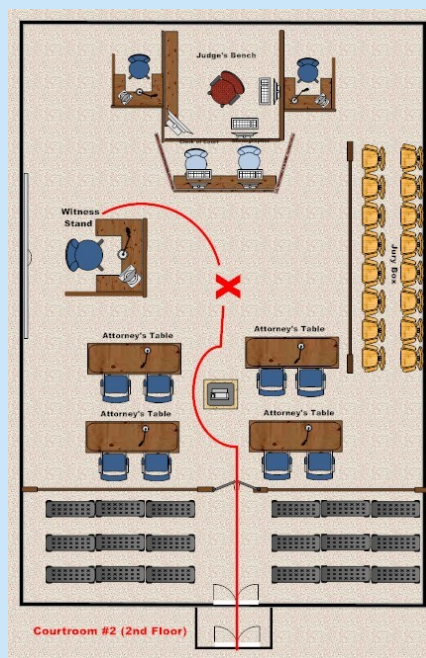
## Federal Courthouse in Cedar Rapids

### Courtroom One (1)



Walk through the doors and through the gates to the "X". At the "X" raise your right hand and wait for the judge to swear you in. Then walk to the witness stand, take a seat and adjust the microphone.

### Courtroom Two (2)



# Coming to Court

(Cedar Rapids)

## Information for Witnesses



**SEAN R. BERRY**

Acting United States Attorney

United States Attorney's Office  
Northern District of Iowa  
111 – 7th Avenue S.E., Box 1  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

**LINDA MERSCH**

Victim-Witness Coordinator  
Main Office - (319) 363-6333  
Toll-Free - (877) 398-2842

## Information

You have now been subpoenaed to court. This is a court order to appear. Because many people are not familiar with courtrooms, court proceedings, and what is expected out of their appearance in court, questions may arise. This pamphlet addresses: commonly asked questions, the courtroom layout and how to properly approach the witness stand, as well as information about your duty to testify.

## Commonly Asked Questions

### Will I be paid for my time(s) spent as a witness?

If you have been subpoenaed to testify and are not a federal government employee, you will receive \$40 for each day you are required to be in court or attend a pretrial interview, including travel days. You will be reimbursed mileage at the current government rate for mileage if you drive. If you incur parking, tolls, or taxi expenses a receipt is required for reimbursement. If you travel to the court and return home the same day, you will NOT receive a meal allowance. To process your reimbursement you will need to complete a "Fact Witness Voucher." This voucher will be completed at the time of your appearance. A check will be mailed to you in approximately four weeks.

### Where do I go?

Your subpoena tells you where, when, and in what room you should report. However, as the court date approaches the Assistant U.S. Attorney, Victim-Witness Coordinator, or case agent may contact you to adjust the exact date and time you will be needed. Please do not be late.

### What should I do with my children?

Childcare is not available at the courthouse. Try to find a relative or friend to watch your children. However, it is important that this person has a flexible schedule, because you may not know the exact time of your return.

### What about my employer?

If requested, we will contact your employer and outline your responsibility as a subpoenaed federal witness. Employers may not retaliate against you because of your absence.

### Where do I park?

In Cedar Rapids, free parking is available in the lot in front of the courthouse. In Sioux City, your parking will be reimbursed at the meter or parking lot cost per hour while you were at the courthouse. A receipt is needed for all parking expenses. If you park at a meter you will need to complete additional paperwork for reimbursements. You will NOT be reimbursed for any parking tickets you may receive.

### Can I attend the trial before I testify?

At the majority of court proceedings witnesses are not allowed to enter the courtroom until they are called to testify.

**\*Grand Jury** - only the witness testifying, the government attorney, court reporter, any interpreter and grand jurors are allowed in the grand jury room.

**\*Trial/Hearing** - these are typically public proceedings. Spectators may be in the courtroom during your testimony but witnesses typically are not allowed in the courtroom except to testify.

**Exception:** If you are the victim as defined by federal statute you may be permitted to be in the courtroom prior to your testimony. Speak with the Victim-Witness Coordinator about this prior to your appearance.

### Is there food available at the courthouse?

There are soda, coffee, and snack machines located around the courthouse, but there is no cafeteria. You are able to bring your own food into the courthouse if you choose, and there are several restaurants available outside and close to the courthouse.

### How long will I be in court?

It is impossible to predict how long you will be at the courthouse. Every effort is made to minimize your wait time. Electronics (iPods, cell phones, laptops, etc) are not permitted in the courthouse, so you may want to bring some reading materials or something else to occupy your time while you wait.

## Appearing in Court

- The court requires all witnesses to dress appropriately for their appearance. Proper dress **does not** include blue jeans, shorts, overalls, T-shirts, collarless shirts, shirts with printed words or phrases on the front or back, tank tops, or the like.
- When you enter the courtroom, go past the gates into the middle of the room and raise your right hand to be sworn in. Once the judge is finished swearing you, then go to the witness stand. (See diagram on back of this pamphlet.)
- Adjust the microphone so you may be heard clearly.
- Make sure to remove and properly dispose of any gum you may be chewing prior to entering the courtroom.
- No food or drink is allowed in the courtroom, but a bottle of water will be provided to you at the witness stand.
- You may not take anything with you to the witness stand. This includes your purse and outerwear as well as any notes, reports, statements, etc.
- There are two parts to testifying, direct examination and cross examination. Direct examination is when the attorney who called you to the stand asks you questions. Once that attorney is done with their questions, the other attorney may ask you questions.
- It is possible that an attorney may interrupt by making an objection\*. If this happens, simply stop talking and wait for the judge to rule on the objection.

**\*Objection:** this means one of the attorneys feels something is impermissible.

The court will make a ruling, either overruling\* or sustaining\* the objection.

**\*Overrule:** meaning the question is proper and you may finish what you were saying.

**\*Sustained:** meaning you shouldn't finish your answer.